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SOME VOLUMES OF CURRENT FICTION.

CECILIA. A Story of Modern Rome. By F. Marion Crawford. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Mr. Crawford always holds the interest of his readers and is loved of a large body of these who have followed him through all his many novels even down to this latest, the story of a new girl in old Rome. The author seems almost to have written the book to give himself ample scope for all his little fads and fancies. Some—his sympathetic art notes, his character and society analysis, his love of laughing at and with his characters, even his moral reflections—we enjoy; but the tendency to discuss at length spiritualism, telepathy, hypnotism, and other psychological questions seems out of place here, and perhaps not altogether healthful in a novel of the day. The story is a little rambling: there is a wrong man, an illness, an almost broken heart, but the curious love tale ends at least sanely. An interesting description is of the incomplete Villa Madama, and a pretty experiment is the picture of its artistic completion.

THE FOUR FEATHERS. By A. E. W. Mason. New York: The Macmillan Company.

"The Four Feathers" is a novel of soldiers and adventure. Certain faults of style are irritating and one wishes they might have been corrected. For example, the use of the pronoun *one* is curiously incorrect throughout the volume. In the first chapter, where the hero's *fear* that he is a coward —the keynote of the book—is presented to the reader, the work is slightly exaggerated, not quite delicate enough for a very delicate situation, and the dark hints of evil to come are undoubtedly cheap. After this introduction, the story hurries on somewhat, until the real work of the author begins after the first seventy-two pages. From now on the interest centers in the hero's redemption of his good name from the charge of cowardice by various acts of reckless bravery. The time is about the end of the Soudanese war, and there is good description of the Soudan country. A very vivid picture is drawn of the terrible prison of Omdurman, the